



## ***NEWS FROM:***

### **Community & Economic Development Agency**

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#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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#### **OAKLAND ADDRESSES VISUAL APPEARANCE OF COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS New Ordinance Prohibits Visible Barbed Wire and Razor Wire in Commercial Zones**

***OAKLAND, Calif. (April 9, 2004)*** – In an effort to improve the visual appeal of Oakland’s commercial districts and to make the districts more inviting to potential shoppers, the Oakland City Council passed the barbed wire and razor wire ordinance (Ordinance No. 12533 C.M.S.) in September 2003. The ordinance bans visible barbed and razor wire in commercial and certain special zones throughout the City. An insert in April’s commercial garbage bills will educate business owners about the ordinance before enforcement begins in September 2004.

The ordinance was created to combat the detrimental effects that barbed and razor wire has on commercial areas. The presence of barbed and razor wire creates a negative identity for a commercial district, degrades the neighborhood’s appearance, discourages potential customers and businesses, and hinders economic development.

Specific zones where barbed and razor wire are prohibited by the new ordinance are all commercial zones (C-5 to C-60) and the following special zones: S-1, S-2, S-3, and S-15. While the use of barbed and razor wire remains prohibited in residential areas, the ordinance does allow for the continued use of these types of wire in industrial zones. To learn how your property is zoned, visit the City’s Zoning Counter at 250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, call the Zoning Information Desk at (510) 238-3911 or visit [www.oaklandnet.com/razorwire](http://www.oaklandnet.com/razorwire) and click on the Zoning Map.

To comply with the new ordinance, affected property owners must remove all barbed and razor wire visible from the street. It can be as easy as clipping the barbed and razor wire off with wire cutters. Fences constructed with a building permit that included barbed or razor wire in the approved construction plans will be allowed to retain the wire. Property owners who have not complied with the ordinance by September may be cited and fined.

(more)

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To make the removal of barbed and razor wire more acceptable to property owners who are concerned about security, the ordinance raised height limits for fences in commercial areas to a maximum fence height of eight feet. Fence heights of 10 feet are allowed upon the granting of a conditional use permit. Other security choices include non-climbable chain link fencing, expanded metal fencing and ornamental or wrought iron fencing. For additional assistance with barbed and razor wire replacement options, please contact the Oakland Police Department's Commercial Security Section at (510) 238-3066.

For general information about the ordinance, please visit [www.oaklandnet.com/razorwire](http://www.oaklandnet.com/razorwire) or call the City's Community and Economic Development Agency at (510) 238-3537.

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